



# WisCon Words of Wisdom

Volume 4 | Issue 11 | November 1, 2024

## Drowsy Driving Prevention

Drowsy Driving Prevention Week® is November 3-9 this year, just in time for our clocks to fall back at the end of daylight saving time. This is the National Sleep Foundation's annual campaign to remind everyone of the risks of impaired driving and reduce the number of sleep deprived drivers.

[NIOSH](#) indicates that most crash incidents related to drowsy driving occur between 4 – 6:00 a.m. with other peak times between midnight – 2:00 a.m. and 2 – 4:00 p.m.

Recognize the warning signs of drowsy driving. These may include difficulty focusing, frequent blinking, or heavy eyelids; daydreaming; trouble remembering the last few miles driven; yawning repeatedly or rubbing your eyes; drifting from your lane or hitting a rumble strip. If you experience any of these signs, pull over to a safe location and rest a while.

## Upcoming Webinars

December 17th: [Walking/Working Surfaces—Slips, Trips, and Falls](#)

### We want to hear from you!

What content would you like to see in an upcoming newsletter? Let us know [here](#).

## OSHA's Top 10 Most Frequently Cited Standards

During the National Safety Council's Safety Congress & Expo in September, OSHA released their preliminary top most frequently cited standards for federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024. The top 10 cited standards include:

1. Duty to have fall protection – Construction ([1926.501](#)): 6,307 violations
2. Hazard Communication – General Industry ([1910.1200](#)): 2,888
3. Ladders – Construction ([1926.1053](#)): 2,573
4. Respiratory Protection – General Industry ([1910.134](#)): 2,470
5. The control of hazardous energy (Lockout/Tagout) ([1910.147](#)): 2,443
6. Powered industrial trucks – General Industry ([1910.178](#)): 2,248
7. Fall Protection, Training requirements – Construction ([1926.503](#)): 2,050
8. Scaffolds, General requirements – Construction ([1926.451](#)): 1,873
9. Eye and Face Protection – Construction ([1926.102](#)): 1,814
10. General requirements for all machines – General Industry ([1910.212](#)): 1,541

Comparing this list to the top 10 cited standards for FFY 2023, those standards ranked 1-3, 9, and 10 remain unchanged. Those ranked 4-8 were also on the list last year, but were shuffled in their order.

## Space Heater Safety Tips

By: Sarah Niehueser

As colder temperatures settle in, many households and workplaces turn to space heaters for extra warmth. While these devices can be effective, it's crucial to prioritize safety to prevent incidents, including fire hazards and carbon monoxide poisoning. Check on your company's work policy about space heaters before bringing them into your workplace.

### Space Heater Safety Tips:

1. **Choose the Right Heater:** Select heaters that have been tested by a recognized testing laboratory. Look for features such as tip-over protection and automatic shut-off.
2. **Placement Matters:** Always place space heaters on

(Continues on Page 2.)

# Can You Dig It? Trench Safety Basics

By: Colton Bailey

The “5,4,3,2,1 trench safety” rule is a way to remember the OSHA CFR 1926.651 and 1926.652 guidelines. These crucial guidelines were designed to ensure the safety of workers in and around trenches and excavations, particularly in the construction and utilities sectors. This rule serves as a comprehensive approach to preventing accidents and fatalities associated with trenching activities, which are inherently hazardous due to the risk of cave-ins, falls, and exposure to harmful substances.

5: Any trench deeper than five feet must have a protective system in place, such as shoring, sloping, or shielding. This is critical as trenches deeper than this are at a higher risk of collapse, which can trap workers and cause serious injury or death.

4: Any trench or excavation deeper than four feet requires a safe means of exit, like a ladder, to be present at all times.

3: Ladders must extend three feet past the landing of the trench. This is to allow for easy access in and out of the trench.

2: Spoil piles must be kept at minimum two feet back from the edge of the excavation or trench. This is to prevent any

material from weighing down the sides of the trench and causing a cave in.

1: There must always be one competent person present to determine any hazards and control or eliminate those hazards. A competent person is defined as an individual, designated by the employer, who can identify existing and predictable hazards in the surroundings or working conditions which are unsanitary, hazardous, or dangerous to workers, and who is authorized to take prompt corrective measures to eliminate them [1].

By following the 5,4,3,2,1 trench safety rule, workers and supervisors can significantly reduce the risks associated with trenching activities, fostering a safer work environment.

References:

- <https://www.lancastersafety.com/dont-get-caught-in-the-trenches/>
- <https://www.osha.gov/sites/default/files/publications/oseha2226.pdf>

## Space Heater Safety Tips (cont.)

flat, stable surfaces, away from flammable materials like curtains, bedding, and furniture. Maintain a three-foot clear space around the heater.

3. **Never Leave It Unattended:** Turn off space heaters when leaving a room or going to sleep. Unattended heaters are a leading cause of home fires.
4. **Avoid Overloading Circuits:** Plug heaters directly into wall outlets. Avoid using extension cords, as they can overheat and pose fire risks.

### Carbon Monoxide (CO) Poisoning Prevention:

Space heaters that use gas, propane, or kerosene can produce carbon monoxide, a colorless and odorless gas that

can be deadly.

To mitigate this risk indoors:

1. **Install Detectors:** Ensure you have carbon monoxide detectors installed and check them regularly.
2. **Ventilation is Key:** If using a fuel-burning heater, ensure the area is well-ventilated. Regularly inspect and maintain the heating unit to prevent leaks. Train employees on the health effects associated with CO exposure.

By following these guidelines, you can enjoy a warm, safe winter while minimizing the risks associated with space heater use.

Wisconsin Safety and Health Consultation Program

Phone: (800) 947-0553 | Email: [wiscon@slh.wisc.edu](mailto:wiscon@slh.wisc.edu)

<http://slh.wisc.edu/wiscon>

WisCon Public Sector Consultation

Phone: (608) 262-6763 | Email: [publicsectorconsulting@slh.wisc.edu](mailto:publicsectorconsulting@slh.wisc.edu)

[Request Services](#)